

## Two Early 19th-Century Malay Documents from Cabau

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### ABSTRACT

This article presents and discusses the texts of two early 19th-century Malay documents from Cabau, on the Kesang river, now in the state of Melaka, which were seen and copied by C.O. Blagden in about 1894 in the house of the Penghulu of Cabau. The sealed commissions were presented to the Penghulu of Cabau by the Temenggung Paduka Tuan of Muar, charging the Penghulu to ensure the holding of communal prayers (*sembahyang berjemaah*) in the region of Cabau. As rare surviving examples of texts on the internal governance of a Malay territory, these documents are valuable for the study of Malay diplomacies and chancery practice. As historical sources, they also cast light on the regulation of Islamic life on the west coast of the Malay peninsula, and on the lineage of the Temenggungs of Muar.

**Keywords:** Cabau; Kesang; Muar; Malay documents; Malay diplomacies; Temenggungs of Muar; Islamic practice.

### Biodata:

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### INTRODUCTION

A search for Malay sources for the history of Malay states usually start with court chronicles, such as the *Sulalat al-Salatin* (*Sejarah Melayu*) for the kingdom of Melaka, *Hikayat raja Pasai* for the state of Samudera-Pasai in north Sumatra, and *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* for Kedah. These chronicles however usually have quite a distinct and limited remit: to establish the genealogical pedigree of the ruling line and hence confirm and strengthen its legitimacy as the sovereign power of the state. In these courtly texts there is little mention of the subjects of the ruler – the *rakyat* – or information on their daily lives, and how the governance of the state was enacted. Moreover, many court histories were only composed some time after the events recounted, and are nearly always only accessible today in scribal copies long post-dating composition, opening the possibility for various emendations and additions to the text in the intervening years.

Far more helpful information on the workings of Malay states and the regimen of everyday life can be found in official decrees and commands which were issued at various levels of the state machinery. Such documents are invaluable historical sources as they are usually dated and were created in specific localities, often give full details of the identity of the issuer and the recipient, and the relationship between them, and were contemporaneous with the processes recorded. The contents of such decrees usually served to regulate a specific activity, and thus can throw light on important aspects of daily life.

Unfortunately such official internal documents from Malay states are very rare; indeed, very much rarer than letters exchanged with foreign or colonial powers, which can still be found in large numbers. Very few Malay documents are known to survive, and even fewer have been published. Probably the largest and most accessible corpus is the sealed commissions in Malay issued by the sultan and nobles of Jambi to local chiefs of villages and settlements upstream on the Batanghari river and its tributaries in highland central Sumatra. Large numbers of such documents from Kerinci were documented and transliterated under the direction of Petrus Voorhoeve in 1941,<sup>1</sup> while others from the Serampas region have been published more recently (Gallop 2009, 2013). From the Malay peninsula, one of the most important collections must have been the ‘thousands’ of papers amassed by Wan Muhammad (d. 1919), Orang Kaya Indera Maharaja Perba of Jelai, Pahang, of which a selection of 15 documents was published by W. Linehan in his *History of Pahang* in 1936 (Linehan 1973: 201-225); however, the current whereabouts of the collection is not known.

It is because of the rarity of such Malay documents from the peninsula that I believed it worthwhile to publish two early 19th-century Malay documents from Cabau, even though these are not known from the original manuscripts, but only from transcriptions made by C.O. Blagden in 1894 or shortly thereafter.

### Cabau and the Muar-Kesang valley

Today, Cabau is a small village located in the district of Jasin in the state of Melaka. It is situated on the upper reaches of the Kesang river, on the Cohong branch flowing down from Gunung Ledang (Figure 1). The Kesang river forms the border between Johor and Melaka, but from the early 18th century onwards, the valley between the Kesang and Muar rivers had a special juridical status within the territory of the kingdom of Johor.

According to a report by Newbold published in 1837 and quoted by Winstedt (1932b: 30), in AH 1119 (1707/8), a Johor noble named ‘Samade Raja’ (Seri Maharaja Diraja?) obtained a grant of the territory of Muar from Sultan Abdul Jalil Syah of Johor (r. 1699-1717). After his death in AH 1145 (1732/3), his son Paduka Tuan was installed by the Sultan of Johor<sup>2</sup> with the title of Temenggung Paduka Tuan. This first Temenggung of Muar died in AH 1175 (1761/2), and was succeeded by his son Burok or Ahok, who had two sons, Konik and Ibrahim. Following the death of Burok in AH 1214 (1799/1800), Konik was confirmed as the third Temenggung by Sultan Mahmud Syah in Lingga. On Konik’s death in AH 1246 (1830/1) he was succeeded by his son Syed, who was confirmed in post in Singapore by Sultan Husain Syah. It was Temenggung Syed who Newbold met; Begbie, in his work published in 1834, also confirmed that the Datuk Temenggung of Muar had succeeded his father in about 1830, at a very young age (Begbie 1967: 146).

In the early 20th century Winstedt met the incumbent Temenggung of Muar, Wan Abdul Rahman, and obtained from him a lineage of the Temenggung line, and a slightly different account of the origins of their rule over Muar. According to this *silsilah*, Maharaja Seri Diraja, the grandson of Sayid Idrus of the Hadramaut, married a daughter of the Orang Kaya of Muar, and had two sons and a daughter. His daughter Marhum Bakal married Sultan Mahmud of Johor (r. 1685-1699, Marhum Mangkat Dijulang), and her brother, Dato’ Pasir Raja, was given Muar by Sultan Mahmud as his sister’s dowry. His descendants have since served as Temenggungs of Muar (Winstedt 1932a: 58). According to this *silsilah*, following Said’s death the title passed to Ibrahim’s son Engku Ismail, and thence to his son Wan Muhammad Salleh and his son Wan Abdul Rahman (Winstedt 1932b: 31).

The special status of Muar-Kesang, and its jurisdiction distinct from territories which by the mid-19th century had become the personal fief of the Temenggungs of Johor, explains why, following the death of Sultan Husain Syah, in 1855 his son Sultan Ali Iskandar Syah agreed, under pressure from the British, to cede sovereignty of Johor to Temenggung Daing Ibrahim, except for the area of

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<sup>1</sup> See Voorhoeve (1970) for an account of this expedition. The texts of 261 documents in Malay and some other languages were compiled as *Tambo Kerintji* (Voorhoeve 1941). In 2006 the 261 texts of the Tambo Kerinci were made accessibly online, in modernised spelling, through the efforts of Uli Kozok: <https://ipll.manoa.hawaii.edu/tambo/>. Individual documents can be identified by their TK number (TK 1-261).

<sup>2</sup> Newbold names this ruler as the same Sultan Abdul Jalil Syah, who in fact died in 1721; in 1732 Abdul Jalil’s son Sulaiman was on the throne of Johor.

Muar-Kesang (Abdullah Zakaria 1997: 33-34). However, this too was lost after the death of Sultan Ali Iskandar Syah in 1877 because the local chieftains – including the Temenggung of Muar – were unhappy at the prospect of the succession of Sultan Ali's oldest son Tengku Alam. They preferred to come under the rule of Daing Ibrahim's son, Maharaja (later Sultan) Abu Bakar of Johor, and this appeal was supported by the British (Abdullah Zakaria 1997: 49-50).

The two documents from Cabau discussed here date from 1819 and 1821/2, and appear to shed new light on the chronology of descent of the Temenggung line, as will be discussed after the presentation of the texts

See Figure 1.

### The two Malay documents from Cabau

Charles Otto Blagden (1864-1949) served in the civil service in the Straits Settlements from 1888 until 1897, when he returned to England. When the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) was founded at London University in 1916, Blagden was appointed Lecturer in Malay in 1917, and stayed at SOAS until his retirement in 1935. Held in SOAS Library today are several volumes of manuscript notebooks by Blagden containing copies of Malay texts and notes on Malay matters, the contents of which were fully listed in the catalogue by Ricklefs & Voorhoeve (1977: 168-171).<sup>3</sup>

In one of these notebooks, MS 297483, labelled 'Lett's Colonial Rough Diary and Almanac for 1894', found amongst loose papers at the end of the volume are copies of 'two documents granting seals (*cap*) to the Penghulu of Cabau, dated A.H. 1235 [A.D. 1819] and 1237 [A.D. 1821]' (Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977: 168). Further copies of these documents are found in another volume, MS 297495 (Ricklefs & Voorhoeve 1977: 169). The volume MS 297483 could not be located when requested, and so the texts of the documents presented here are based on the copies in the second volume of MS 297495, where the two Cabau documents fill four pages (ff. 31v-33r), and are described by Blagden himself as follows:

*Two chops belonging to the Penghulu of Chabau  
These two chops were copied at the house of Penghulu Sulong Arin of Chabau, to whose ancestors they had been granted by the Dato' Temenggong of Muar who at that period claimed and in fact exercised jurisdiction in a part of what is now Malacca Territory. It will be noticed that the chops make no reference to any duties except that of keeping up the worship of the Mosque. (SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, f. 32r)*

Blagden had made careful transcriptions of the Jawi-script documents, one of which was in very poor condition leading to losses of text, and he also provided full romanised versions. Presented below are transliterations of the two documents, together with English translations. The new transliterations from the Jawi text have been checked against Blagden's romanisations, and any substantive changes are noted.

#### **A. Sealed commission (*cab*) issued by Sayid Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan to the Pengulu of Cabau, 3 Jumadilakhir 1235 (18 March 1820).**

SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, ff. 31v-32r (see Figures 2-3)

On the lower part of f. 32r is the text of the sealed document in Jawi, copied by Blagden, with a drawing of the seal on the upper right, and the annotation by Blagden, *chop illegible*. On f. 31v is the romanisation.

[seal illegible]

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<sup>3</sup> In this article I am using the shelfmarks listed in Ricklefs & Voorhoeve (1977). According to the online catalogue of SOAS Archives, the six volumes of Blagden notebooks have now been given a new number, MS 381210: <http://archives.soas.ac.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=MS+381320&pos=5>

*Qawluh al-Ḥaqq*

*Hijrat al-nabi sallallahu alaihi wassalam seribu dua ratus tiga puluh / lima tahun kepada tahun zai dan kepada tiga hari bulan Jumadil/akhir dan kepada hari Jumaat waktu asar bahwasanya dewasa / itu Sayid Engku Temenggong Paduka Tuan dijunjukkan cab / ke atas Pengu[lu] mukim Cabau akan mendirikan sembahyang ber/jemaah dari Asah[an] hingga sampaikan akan Cabau. Hai segala2 / Islam, hubaya2 jangan tiadalah sembahyang melainkan barang / siapa tiada mengikut akan kata perkataan<sup>4</sup> di dalam cab ini der/hakalah kepada Allah dan kepada rasul Allah. Kemudian kepada segala raja2 Islam! Syahadan barang siapa tiada mau sembahyang ber/jemaah, matinya jangan segala pegawai kita sembahyangkan, dan / nikah akan segala orang bujang dan segala orang yang beranak ber/bini itupun jangan segala pegawai minta doakan, melainkan {bar} / barang siapa tiada sembahyang hendaklah Pengulu mukim hukuman / empat rial. Syahadan jikalau Pengulu tiada sembahyang hendaklah / segala pegawai dan segala orang banyak hukuman sepuluh rial Pengulu / itulah adanya. Tammat.*

**Translation:**

His Saying is the Truth

In the year of the migration of the Prophet, the peace and blessings of God be upon him, one thousand two hundred and thirty five, in the year *zai*, on the third of Jumadilakhir, on Friday, at the time of the afternoon prayer, at that time Sayid Engku Temenggong Paduka Tuan bestowed a seal[ed commission] on the Pengulu of the parish of Cabau, charging him to establish the holding of communal prayers from Asah[an] to Cabau. Oh Muslims, do not on any account not perform your prayers, for whosoever disobeys the order set out in this sealed commission is guilty of treason against God and against His messenger. Oh Muslim chiefs, whosoever does not perform the communal prayers, at their deaths our officials will not hold prayers for them; neither for the nuptials of their unmarried children or for their wives and families will our officials fulfill requests for prayers to be held. Indeed, whosoever does not perform his prayers will be fined four *rial* by the Pengulu. If the Pengulu [himself] does not perform his prayers, then the officials and ordinary people should fine him ten *rial*. Finis.

See Figure 2 and 3.

**B. Sealed commission (*surat ecap*) issued by Datuk Engku Alna, Temenggong Paduka Tuan of Muar to Datuk Dalim of Cabauh, 1237 (1821/2).**

SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, ff. 32v-33r (Figures 4-5).

Above the Jawi transcription Blagden has written: *No. 2 (badly preserved)*, and at the bottom: *[All the mistakes in the original spelling have been carefully reproduced]*.

[Seal]: *Engku Alna Datu / Temenggong Paduka Tuan / faqir ila Allah / 1237*

*[Hi]jrat nabi sallallahu alaihi saribu dua ratusy tiga puluh tujuh tahun kepada tah[hun] / dal adanya, akan hal Datuk Engku Temenggong Paduka Tuan yang 'ada<sup>5</sup> bermu'im<sup>6</sup> / daerah Muar ini membuat surat ecap<sup>7</sup> akan membarikan kepada Datuk / Dalim yang 'ada berkampung di dalam Cabauh<sup>8</sup> kiranya akan menyuruhkan mendiri[kan] / igama Islam<sup>9</sup> berkampung berbuat jemaah kiranya kepada segala anak bu[ah]/nya itu. Dan jikalau tiada ma'u<sup>10</sup> mengikut anak buah itu, melainkan / hukuman*

<sup>4</sup> *ta* written with one dot.

<sup>5</sup> *ada* spelt with 'ain: '-d-a; Blagden omits this word.

<sup>6</sup> I.e. *bermukim*; spelt b-r-m-'-m; Blagden reads *berma* 'm; I suggest this may have been intended as b-r-m-q-m, *bermukim*, but with the two dots of *qaf* omitted; see also below for other variant spellings of *mukim*.

<sup>7</sup> e-c-f

<sup>8</sup> c-a-b-w-h

<sup>9</sup> Or, *al-[I]slam*; written a-l-s-l-a-m, with the beginning of *sin* heightened to resemble *lam*.

<sup>10</sup> m-a-'-w

*dua puluh kepada satu orang itu. Pertama2 orang yang disuruh / berkampung itu suku Mungkal dan kadua orang Semelagang<sup>11</sup> dan ketiga / suku Biduanda dan kaempat suku orang Tiga Batu, itulah / yang masuk hukuman kepada Datuk Pengulu mungkim,<sup>12</sup> tiada boleh tidak / kiranya, sahingganya<sup>13</sup> mangka<sup>14</sup> membawa ka ilir itu bulatlah ka Cabauh itu / jemaahnya, dan sembahyang hari rayanya itu kiranya tiada boleh tidak. / Itulah perkhabaran Engku Datuk Temenggung kepada Pengulu mu'im<sup>15</sup> dan kepada / segala anak buah itu. Dan jikalau anak buah itu tiada ma[u?] / manimbang hukumman<sup>16</sup> Pengulu itu akulah menghukumkan hu[k]um ... / ...*

[on the other side]

*tahil kepada satu orang kemudian lagi ak[u] ... arkan kepada segala ... / ... kepada bila ... / ... s ... k ... / ... tiada mahu berguru malan<sup>17</sup> ... / ... madulah ....*

### Translation:

[Seal]: *Engku Alna Datu / Temenggung Paduka Tuan / the mendicant before God / 1237*

In the year of the migration of the Prophet, the blessings of God be upon him, one thousand two hundred and thirty seven, in the year *dal*. Wherefore Datuk Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan, who holds jurisdiction in this district of Muar, drew up this sealed commission for presentation to Datuk Dalim who resides in Cabauh, commanding him to propagate the religion of Islam through the establishment of settlements and communal prayer for all his people. If any of his people do not obey, they should be fined twenty<sup>18</sup> each. This settlement order applies firstly to the clan of Mungkal, secondly the people of Semelagang, thirdly the clan of Biduanda, and fourthly the clan of the people of Tiga Batu; these are the people under the jurisdiction of the Datuk Pengulu of the parish, and no dissent will be brooked, and so all the way upriver and back down to Cabauh is the extent of the congregation, and prayers for the feast days must not be neglected. This is the announcement of Engku Datuk Temenggung to the Pengulu of the parish and his people. If the people do not obey the commands of the Pengulu then I will sentence them according to the law ... / ...

[on the other side]

*... tahil each. Furthermore ... to the ... / ... to when ... / ... s ... k ... / ... do not wish to study ... / ...*  
[meaning unclear].

See Figure 4 and 5.

### Commentary on the documents

As is well known, Malay letters from all over the archipelago adhere closely to a standard format. The opening compliments (*puji-pujian*) comprise the following elements: *this letter / from me / may it be conveyed / by God (or man) / to / you / who live / at X / amen*, each part of which could be elaborated as necessary, sometimes to great lengths. After this comes the Arabic word *wa-ba'd* or *wa-ba'duh* often followed by the Malay equivalent *kemudian daripada itu*, 'and after that', heralding the contents proper. The letter would end with a note about an accompany gift, be this only prayers, followed by a statement of the place and date of writing (Gallop 1994: 67).

The diplomatic or formal structure of Malay documents is quite different, but equally widely recognized throughout the Malay world for all types of documents, from royal decrees and official proclamations, to legal or commercial deeds such as records of sale, powers of attorney, and

<sup>11</sup> s-m-l-a-g-ng, i.e. Semela[ng]gang.

<sup>12</sup> I.e. *bermukim*; spelt m-ng-k-y-m, *mungkim*, can be read as *mukim* by comparison with the next occurrence of the word, in which it is spelt almost identically m-'-k-y-m, *mu'kim*, but without the three dots of *nga*.

<sup>13</sup> s-a-h-y-ng-g-n; the final letter *num* may have been intended as *nya*.

<sup>14</sup> I.e. *maka*; spelt m-ng-k, *mangka*.

<sup>15</sup> I.e. *mukim*, spelt m-'-k-y-m; see discussion above.

<sup>16</sup> h-k-m-m-n

<sup>17</sup> b-r-k-w-r-w m-l-a-n; Blagden has: *berpuru 'alam? [malam?]*.

<sup>18</sup> The unit of currency is not specified.

statements of debt. The opening protocol, nearly always commencing with the date, takes the following form: *on this day / and at this time / X / granted this document / to Y / for this purpose*. The date is usually given in very full form, often comprising year, month, date, year in the *daur kecil* eight-year cycle, weekday, time of day, and sometimes even time of prayer. One of the most characteristic – and archaic – features of this formulary is the phrase that follows meaning ‘at that time’, using a Sanskrit-derived word such as *dewasa*, *ketika* or *tatkala*. This is then followed by the identification of the issuer, the type of document, the recipient, and the purpose of the document. A royal or official command to carry out something may then be elaborated, followed by an admonition to obey the command, with specifications of the penalty for non-compliance.

Both the Cabau documents comply with this formal structure, as shown in the chart below for the opening formulary. However, while A could be regarded as an exemplar of the form, B is less typical: the date element consists only of the *hijrah* and *daur kecil* year and terminates decisively with the word *adanya*, without the connecting phrase ‘at this time’.

Opening formulary	Document A	Document B
On this day	<i>Hijrat al-nabi sallallahu alaihi wassalam seribu dua ratus tiga puluh lima tahun kepada tahun zai dan kepada tiga hari bulan Jumadilakhir dan kepada hari Jumaat waktu asar</i>	<i>[Hi]jrat nabi sallallahu alaihi saribu dua ratusy tiga puluh tujuh tahun kepada tah[hun] dal adanya</i>
and at this time	<i>bahwasanya dewasa itu</i>	
X	<i>Sayid Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan</i>	<i>akan hal Datuk Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan yang ‘ada bermu‘im daerah Muar ini</i>
granted this document	<i>dijujungkan cab</i>	<i>membuat surat ecap akan membarikan</i>
to Y	<i>ke atas Pengu[lu] mukim Cabau</i>	<i>kepada Datuk Dalim yang ‘ada berkampung di dalam Cabauh kiranya</i>
for this purpose	<i>akan mendirikan sembahyang ber/jemaah dari Asah[an] hingga sampaikan akan Cabau</i>	<i>akan menyuruhkan mendiri[kan] igama Islam berkampung berbuat jemaah kiranya kepada segala anak bu[ah]nya itu</i>

Although both documents are only known from Blagden’s copies, he stresses the accuracy of the copies, particularly in the case of B, where he states ‘All the mistakes in the original spelling have been carefully reproduced.’ And indeed, while A is conventionally written, B exhibits many idiosyncracies of orthography. In particular, the scribe seems to have grappled with the use of the letter ‘ain, and in two cases, *ada*, ‘[there] is’, is spelt with initial ‘ain, and once *mau* with a medial ‘ain rather than the expected *hamzah* (m-a-‘-w). The word the scribe had most trouble with – and in fact can only be correctly reinstated by recognizing these scribal tendencies – is *mukim*, which occurs three times, in each case spelt differently: m-‘-m, m-ng-k-m and m-‘-k-y-m. In all three cases, the basic letter form of ‘ain is used in the middle of the word, but in one instance three dots are added to change this to *nga*.

Both documents issue instructions to the Pengulu (as the title is consistently spelt in both documents, without *ha*) of Cabau to take responsibility for the holding of communal prayers (*sembahyang berjemaah*). In A the area of his responsibility is specified as stretching from Cabau upriver to Asahan, while in B the order given is to supervise the settlement into villages of the four clans of Mungkal, Semelagang (i.e. Semelenggang), Biduanda and Tiga Batu stretching downriver

from Cabau. While the Biduanda are recognized as the original inhabitants of the area, the three other clans named were descendants of Minangkabau migrants from Sumatra.<sup>19</sup>

As noted above, it was usual in royal Malay orders or commands to include an admonition to obey the order – or rather, not to contravene the order, for the standard wording was of the form *hubaya-hubaya jangan dilalui*, ‘Do not on any account contravene this’. Awareness of this common phraseology explains the seemingly awkward double negative used in A: *hubaya-hubaya jangan tiadalah sembahyang*, ‘Do not on any account not perform the prayers’.

In both documents, penalties are specified for contravening these commands. Interestingly, in A, two separate appeals are made: first to all Muslims (*segala-segala Islam*), with the warning that transgressors will be regarded as having perpetrated treason against God and the Prophet; but secondly specifically to Muslim nobles or chiefs (*segala raja-raja Islam*), who are warned that if they do not join in the communal prayers, then religious officials will not hold prayers on their death, or at the nuptials of their kin, or at births or family events. The fine for not performing communal prayers is four *rial*, but if the Pengulu himself is guilty of not performing his prayers, his misdemeanour is viewed more seriously and he should be fined ten *rial*. In B – issued just two years later – the penalty appears to be harsher, at twenty; however, the unit of currency is not specified. In the event of the people under the Pengulu’s sway not obeying this order, the Temenggung himself will punish them, but unfortunately the text of the original document B is mostly lost from this point on.

The self-referential term used for each document are *cab* (c-b) in A and *surat ecap* (e-c-f) in B. In the case of A, what is meant by *cab* is the sealed commission itself, not a seal. Thus the catalogue description by Ricklefs & Voorhoeve (1977: 168) as ‘two documents granting seals (*cap*) to the Pengulu of Cabau’ needs correction, as the documents do not actually grant seals to the Pengulu of Cabau; rather, the phrase in A, *dijujungkan cab ke atas* means ‘presents this seal[ed commission] to’. This can be confirmed by reference to B, where the equivalent phrase reads *membuat surat ecap akan membarikan kepada*, ‘prepared a sealed commission for presentation to’. Blagden appears quite familiar with the use of the term ‘chop’ to refer to the documents themselves, for he describes the two documents as ‘Two chops belonging to the Pengulu of Chabau’. In both cases, the reference to a seal (*cab*, *ecap*) highlights the important role of the seal in authorising the document.

The seal on A was completely illegible when Blagden viewed the document. However, he was able to give a clear reading of the inscription on the seal on B, albeit without any information on the shape or decoration: *Engku Alna Datu Temenggung Paduka Tuan faqir ila Allah 1237*, ‘Engku Alna Datu Temenggung Paduka Tuan, the mendicant before God, 1237 (1821/2)’ (Gallop 2019: 313, cat. 897). A study of Malay seals confirms that the date on a Malay seal normally refers to the date on which the sealholder was installed with the official title inscribed on the seal (and thus also usually indicates the date the seal was made) (Gallop 2015: 90). The implication is thus that Engku Alna was installed as Datu Temenggung Paduka Tuan of Muar in AH 1237 (1821/2), succeeding the previous incumbent, Sayid Engku, the Temenggung Paduka Tuan who had issued document A on 18 March 1820.

It is difficult to reconcile these names and dates with the *silsilah* of the Temenggungs of Muar published by Winsted (1932b: 31). However, since the patriarch of the line was Sayid Idrus from the Hadramaut, this would imply that all the Temenggungs of Muar would have been entitled to use the title Sayid/Syed (Arabic: *sayyid*, s-y-d). Perhaps the ‘Syed’, son of Konik, who Newbold met in the 1830s, was named Engku Sa’id (s-’-y-d) – the spelling preferred by Winstedt – and not necessarily the same Sayid Engku who issued A in 1820. The Cabau documents suggest that Engku Alna succeeded Sayid Engku as Temenggung Paduka Tuan of Muar in 1821/2. How these names relate to the *silsilah* – which does not record the succession of new Temenggung between Konik on the death of Burok in ca. 1800 and Engku Said in 1830 – needs further local research in Muar-Kesang to clarify the issue.

### The regulation of Islamic practice in Malay documents

The two documents from Cabau, dated 1820 and 1821/2, deal with the regulation of Islamic practice in the parish (*mukim*) of Cabau, specifically for ensuring the holding of communal Friday prayers, in accordance with the commands of the overlord of the region, the Temenggung Paduka Tuan of Muar.

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<sup>19</sup> On these clans see Nathan and Winstedt 1971: 406-407.

Although such instructions dealing with Islamic obligations are not present in the documents from the collection of Maharaja Purba of Jelai published by Linehan, it should be stressed that Linehan only selected 15 documents from the ‘thousands’ in the original archive.

We do however encounter similar instructions in the much larger number of royal Malay decrees issued by the sultan and nobles of Jambi and still carefully held today as precious heirlooms (*pusaka*) in many villages in the interior highlands of central Sumatra. For example, a decree (*piagam*) issued for the installation of the Dipati Muncak Tiang Igama in Sungai Tenang, attributable to the 1880s in the reign of Sultan Ahmad Nasiruddin of Jambi, includes a description of the religious duties of the Dipati, and the penalties for contravention:

*dan seperti di dalam igama demikian juga merintahkan membuat langar dan surau dan mesjid dan sembahyang lima waktu dan zakat dan {dan} fitrah dan sesiapa tia(da) mau mengerjakan maka dikutukkan firman Allah ta'ala dengan tiga kutuk*

‘and as for religious life so too will he administer the construction of prayer halls and prayer houses and mosques, and the performing of prayers five times a day, and the collection of religious tithes, and the enactment of good works; and whosoever disobeys will be cursed by the word of God the Almighty with three curses’ (Gallop 2013: 33-35).

Prescriptions concerning religious observance are also found in much earlier decrees from Jambi. Voorhoeve mentions a document held by the Depati of Sanggaran Agung which he saw in 1941, issued by Pangeran Ratu (or Sukarta) Negara to the local chiefs of Sanggaran Agung, informing them of his father’s death in AH 1119 (1707/8), and announcing that he will take over his father’s task of enforcing the tenets of Islam (*mendirikan syara’*) (Voorhoeve 1970: 398). Another document inspected by Voorhoeve, held in Mendapo Limo Dusun in Sungai Penuh, was issued by Pangeran Sukarta of Jambi on 22 Jumadilakhir 1192 (18 July 1778) to four Depati. After a long list of regulations relating to the collection of jungle produce, local laws and chains of commands, the last part states the Pangeran’s intention to enforce Islamic practices throughout Kerinci (*mengeraskan hukum syara’ di dalam tanah Kerinci*), focussing on four aspects:

*Pertama jikalau kematian jangan diarak dengan gendang, gung, serunai dan bedil dan kedua, jangan diberi laki2 bercampur dengan perempuan bertauh nyanyi suatu tempat dan kedua jangan bersalih memuji hantu dan syetan dan batu, kayu dan barang sebagainya dan ketiga jangan menikahkan perempuan dengan tiyada walinya dan keempat jangan makan minum yang haram dan barang sebagainya daripada segala yang tiyada diharuskan syara’. Hubaya-hubaya jangan dikerjakan! Demikianlah titah duli Pangeran mintak kembangkan kepada segala Depati dan segala Malin yang ada di dalam tanah Kerinci adanya.*

*Dan barang siyapa tiyada mau mengikut syara’ maka hukumkan oleh segala Malin dengan mufakat seperti hukum syara’ jangan disalahi. Jikalau orang yang tiada mau mengikut hukum syara’ maka segala para Depati dan para Mangku serta mufakat dengan para Menteri mengeraskan hukum syara’ itu adanya. Demikianlah perintah duli Pangeran Sukarta. Hubaya-hubaya jangan dilalu! Tammatulkalam bikhairi wassalam. Adapun yang menyurat piagam ini Tuan Haji Imam Abdul Rauf dititahkan duli Pangeran Sukarta Negara. (TK 4, Voorhoeve 1941: 3).*

‘Firstly, do not process corpses accompanied by cymbals, gongs, clarinets or gunshots; secondly do not let men sit alongside women singing in the same space; secondly [sic] do not allow the belief in or worship of ghosts and devils or stones and wood and other such things; thirdly do not allow the marriage of women without their guardians; fourthly do not eat or drink anything prohibited; and do not do anything else not endorsed by Islamic law. Do not on any account do any of these! This is the order of the Lord Pangeran to be implemented by the Depatis and Malins of Kerinci.



Whoever refuses to obey Islamic law should be punished by the Malins in agreed accordance with Islamic law, do not err in this. For those who refuse to obey Islamic law, then the Depatis and Mangkus should consult with the Menteri in order to implement Islamic law. This is the order of the Lord Pangeran Sukarta, do not on any account contravene this!

The end of the words, with goodwill and peace. This decree was written by Tuan Haji Imam Abdul Rauf, on the orders of Pangeran Sukarta Negara.'

All these examples show both that the enforcement of Islamic law and practices was regarded as a core responsibility of the royal Malay courts and their provincial representatives; at the same time, the wording of the documents may reflect still prevalent practices causing concern, including the veneration of non-animate entities in Jambi, and a lax attitude to the holding of communal prayers in Muar-Kesang.

In all the Jambi documents seen, prescriptions relating to Islamic life form just one part of a long list of regulations to be observed. The Cabau documents are unusual in so far being the only Malay documents seen issued purely for the enforcement of the holding of communal prayers. However it is not necessarily correct to assume, as Blagden seems to in his comment ('It will be noticed that the chops make no reference to any duties except that of keeping up the worship of the Mosque'), that these documents represent the formal recognition of the Pengulu of Cabau by the Temenggung of Muar, with the only condition being to enforce the holding of communal prayer. It is possible that the Pengulus of Cabau also received further sealed commissions from the Temenggung regulating matters such as the collection of taxes.

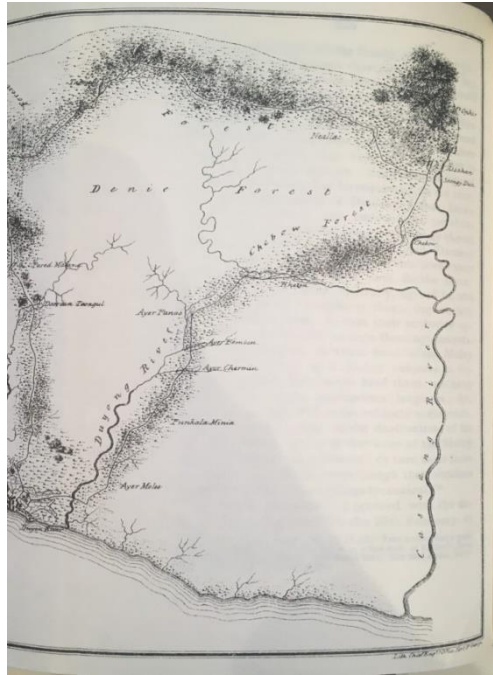
## CONCLUSION

Despite not being original manuscripts, on close scrutiny the careful copies made by Blagden of two early 19th-century Malay documents from Cabau are able to yield considerable information, both on chancery practice and on certain aspects of daily life. They provide further evidence of the widespread adherence to the formal diplomatics of Malay documents already known from other manuscripts from all over the archipelago, and yet of which surprisingly few can be documented today. The documents also contribute potentially new information on the lineage of the Temenggungs of Muar. Furthermore, with reference to debates about the extent to which Islamic institutions were established in Malay states, the Cabau documents play a valuable role in confirming the centrality of the regulating of Islamic practice in traditional Malay governance in a territory on the west coast of the peninsula before the era of high colonialism.

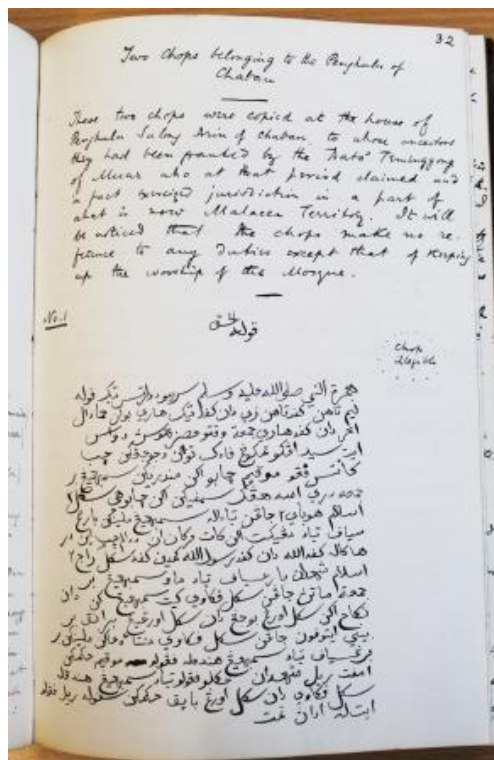
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**Figure 1.** A map of the environs south of Melaka ca. 1834 showing the Kesang (*Cassang*) river on the right, with the locations of Cabau (*Chebaw*) and Asahan (*Assahan*) on the Cohong branch near Gunung Ledang (*Mt Ophir*). Detail from ‘This Reconnoitering Survey presented to Colonel Hanson by His obliged and faithful servant, Matthew Poole’, from Begbie (1967: facing p. 207).



**Figure 2.** Jawi copy made by C.O. Blagden of document A, issued by Sayid Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan to the Pengulu of Cabau, 3 Jumadilakhir 1235 (18 March 1820). SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, f. 32r



**Figure 3.** Romanised transliteration by C.O. Blagden of a document A, issued by Sayid Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan to the Pengulu of Cabau, 3 Jumadilakhir 1235 (18 March 1820). SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, f. 31v



**Figure 4.** Jawi copy made by C.O. Blagden of document B, issued by Datuk Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan to Datuk Dalim of Cabauh, 1237 (1821/2). SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, f. 33r



**Figure 5.** Romanised transliteration by C.O. Blagden of document B, issued by Datuk Engku Temenggung Paduka Tuan to Datuk Dalim of Cabauh, 1237 (1821/2). SOAS MS 297495, Vol. II, f. 32v